Lessons Learned about Lessons Learned

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Observations From OA ISM Evaluations

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Background

- Expectation to apply lessons learned is ingrained in many DOE policies

- Essential element of ISM Core Function 5

- Expectations and guidance, but no DOE order

- Programs evaluated by OA-50

- Common strengths and weaknesses

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Expectations

- DOE Policy 450.4

- DOE Standard 7501-99

- DOE Handbook 7502-95

- SELLS Fact Sheets

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What's Working and What's Not

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Roles and Responsibilities

(+) R&Rs are defined in written procedures

(+) Contractor R&Rs are detailed in job descriptions

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Staff Qualification & Training

(+) Listed in position descriptions and training plans for staff

(–) Training for managers and users less well defined

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Researching Potential Sources

(+) Generally addressed in program procedures

(–) Minimal population to be screened not
specified

(–) Documentation of screening/results not
required

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LL Criteria & Thresholds

(+) Need to identify internal LL specified.

(+) Criteria/thresholds described in general terms

(–) Need to incorporate LL generation in work control procedures

(–) Management needs to encourage/emphasize generating internal lessons learned

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Timeliness Requirements for Generation and Incorporation

(**+/–**) Timeliness requirements not often specified, but rarely a problem in performance

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Validation and Approval Processes

(+) Usually adequately incorporated into procedures

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Dissemination Methods

(+) Dissemination vehicles usually described in procedures

(+) Email, Web databases, safety committees, newsletters, and bulletin board postings

(–) Some sites lack searchable, user friendly databases or easy access to historical lessons learned

(–) Poor sharing of internal lessons learned with other facilities and especially the DOE complex

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Applying Lessons Learned

(+) Addressed in general terms in lessons learned, work planning, and training procedures

(–) Procedures often lack specifics

(–) Record of application poorly documented

(–) Applicability and actions not tailored to site/facility

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Documentation Requirements

(–) Lack of formality most common program weakness

(–) "Too hard/No help" view pervasive

(+) Key element of successful management systems
- Provides the incentive to do the right thing
- Provides the basis for verifying implementation
- Can be crafted to minimize impact

Feedback Systems

(–) Expectations/processes not typically in procedures

(–) Feedback on successes and needed process improvements are informal

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Tracking Lessons Learned Actions

(+) Typically limited to major events/actions

(–) Requirements not specified in procedures

(–) Tracking informal, inconsistent, incomplete

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Performance Indicators and Trend Analysis

(**–**) Trending very limited and rudimentary

(**–**) Use of performance indicators rare

(**+/–**) Expectations/guidance provided, execution can be difficult

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Performance Assessment

(+) Guidance available in Appendix C of the DOE Standard

(–) Few self or independent assessments performed

(–)   When performed, need more rigor and ensure deficiencies are adequately addressed

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Management Commitment

(+) Commitment communicated in policies and statements

(−) Commitment not always demonstrated beyond policy:
  - **Inadequate Resources**
  - **Little Performance Monitoring**
  - **Little Accountability for Ineffective Implementation**

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Opportunities For Improvement

- More Formality and Rigor

- Routinely Assess and Monitor Performance

- Demonstrate Management Commitment

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Summary

- Consistent Performance
  - ➢ Common Strengths
  - ➢ Common Weaknesses
- Lack of Formality and Rigor
  - ➢ Incentive to Perform
  - ➢ Objective Evidence/Evaluation Basis
- Demonstrate Management Commitment
  - ➢ Expectations, Resources, Encouragement, Monitoring, Accountability